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A call to **RESIST** illegitimate authority

August-September 1982 — 38 Union Square, Somerville, Mass. 02143 — Newsletter #150

SAYING NO

Once upon a time the unthinkable became thinkable, and the previously unconceived of began to blind us to the horror of the familiar. It was the achievement of books like Jonathan Schell's *Fate of the Earth* to fill our heads with precise images for ultimate destruction: the firestorm, the blast wave, the reduction of ozone. Conventional war palled in comparison. In a way, June 12 was the culmination of our education, our recognition, as hundreds of thousands marched to to rid the world of our nightmares.

Then the summer came and not much was happening on the nuclear war front. The Administration and Congress were impressed by June 12 in spite of themselves. The nuclear freeze got some serious consideration. The defense appropriations bill passed with the MX and civil defense provisions intact. The nuclear freeze bill headed for defeat, at least for this year.

Meanwhile, Lebanon: the invasion, the bombing of Sidon and Tyre, and then the attack on Beirut. Also this summer came the first draft indictments. Threatened so many times, when they finally occurred they seemed vaguely old hat. The anti-draft movement had been crying wolf for two years. When the wolf finally arrived there wasn't much of a movement to greet him.

There has been a fair amount written about the continuum of violence, how conventional will become nuclear. The Middle East has long been chosen as the site of such a war, and Daniel Ellsberg has explained that conventional forces will be the "tripwire." But right now, faced with the relentless shelling of Beirut, the ruthlessness of that violence, it seems obscene to condemn the conventional because it may lead to worse.

The reality of conventional war is terrible enough. The actions of a million young men in saying no to such horror should not need justifying, not to the government, not to the courts, and finally, not to the peace movement.

ISRAEL'S ONSLAUGHT

NOAM CHOMSKY

While bodies decompose in the shattered hospitals of Beirut and starving refugees flee the ruins of their towns and villages, it is not easy to sit back and calmly assess the consequences of the latest Israeli onslaught. It perhaps borders on the obscene for Americans to do so, given the crucial U.S. role in this latest atrocity. One's sense of despair and futility is enhanced by the generally uncritical coverage in the U.S. press. It took a British writer, John le Carré, to render an honest judgment: "The invasion was a monstrosity, launched on speciously assembled grounds, against a people who on the Israeli's own admission constitute no serious military threat. . . . It is the most savage irony that Begin and his generals cannot see how close they are to inflicting upon another people the disgraceful criteria once inflicted upon themselves. It is worse still that they have so far taken the Americans with them."

The last comment is largely true, despite some timid protests. While the European community "vigorously condemned" the Israeli invasion and called for the "immediate and unconditional withdrawal" of the invading army, the United States stood alone in vetoing a UN Security Council resolution condemning Israel for rejecting an earlier demand for withdrawal of Israeli troops. As the *New York Times* has noted, "Mr. Haig has seemed to show some identification with the Israeli cause," for example, when he told reporters that "we" lost a plane and a helicopter, referring to Israeli losses. His slip of the tongue captures the essence of the U.S. government response.

As for the press, headlines read "Israeli Jets Bomb Guerilla Targets in Reprisal Strike" or "Israel Bombs PLO Targets" while in the small print we find that

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whole towns are leveled, hospitals struck, residential areas turned to rubble. Meanwhile the *New Republic* castigates the "brutal" PLO for "lur[ing] punitive Israeli bombs" to Lebanese "towns and villages." The tabloid press expresses with great clarity the attitudes barely concealed in the more measured tones of the quality journals. A seven-inch headline in the *Boston Herald American* reads "TOP JEWS ON DEATH LIST," while, below, a quarter-inch is devoted to the insignificant fact that "Israeli retaliation raids kill 210." The *New York Post* features a four-inch headline reading "SECRET PLO DEATH LIST," over a picture of Beirut in flames. Arabs have been successfully dehumanized by a spectacular propaganda campaign extending over many years. In consequence, Israel can today massacre with impunity.

Imagine the response in the West if the PLO were to have bombed Israeli towns in "retaliation" for the death of a guerilla killed by a land mine in northern Israel, or if the PLO gunboats regularly shelled Haifa, or sank Israeli fishing boats off the coast of Tel Aviv. There would be no limits to the horror over these sadistic acts. But the victims this time are Palestinians and Lebanese, so the horrors elicit only a muted response. Once the fighting dies down, attitudes here will no doubt return to those typified by the vote of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to increase grant aid to Israel beyond the vast sums proposed by the Reagan administration, and by California Senator Alan Cranston's amendment requiring that U.S. economic assistance cover all Israeli debts, since, as he stated, "it is in our interest to have an economically and militarily strong Israel as our foremost ally in the region" and "Israel can't keep pace" with the Arab military buildup.

The efficiency of the Israeli military machine has elicited much admiration in the United States. Nonetheless an image has been constructed of a beleaguered Israel that wishes only peace with its powerful and vicious neighbors, who are committed to its destruction and backed by the USSR. Like most propaganda themes, this one contains a particle of truth but conceals a very different reality. It is remarkable to see the extent to which its various elements are believed. The scholarly literature as well as the media have largely excised from history the Israeli initiatives — called "retaliation" if even noted — in the escalation of terror and violence since the founding of the state, and before. Furthermore, Senator Cranston accurately expresses the dominant perception in the U.S. government when he describes Israel as a strategic asset. Since the late 1950s, American planners have regarded a powerful Israel as a barrier to radical Arab nationalism, and more recently as a base for the projection of American power in the Middle East and even in regions as distant as Africa. While relations have vacillated, this perception has increasingly come to the fore as Israel has manifested its power in the face of threats to U.S. domination of the Middle East. Thus we have Henry Kissinger coolly praising the latest Israeli invasion as "congruent with the

interests of the peace process in the Middle East, of all moderate governments in the area, and of the United States."

Since shortly after the 1967 war, both major political groupings in Israel, Labour and Likud, have been committed to some form of effective integration of the presently occupied territories into Israel. With the coming of the Likud coalition to power and the exclusion of Egypt from the conflict, these steps have been rapidly accelerated in ways that are familiar. While the pretext is "security" — as for every action of every state — the motivating factors have been different: control over precious water resources, access to cheap labor and a controlled market, and simply more territory. The long-term logic of this program is that much of the indigenous population must be somehow removed. As former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin explained, Israel must create "conditions which would attract natural and voluntary migration of the refugees from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank to East Jordan." Jordan must become the "Palestinian State" that Israeli propaganda already makes it out to be. Israeli military specialist Ze'ev Schiff recently observed that General Sharon was motivated to attack Lebanon by "the belief that quiet on the West Bank cannot be achieved merely by dismissing [Palestinian mayors] Shak'a and Khalaf but rather by the destruction of the PLO in Lebanon, and that the transformation of Jordan to Palestine will take place when the Palestinians will be uprooted from Lebanon." An Israeli success in Lebanon may therefore be expected to set the stage for more efficient repression in the occupied territories. Since military victory will also eliminate the last shreds of any security argument against granting full independence to the occupied territories, new prodigies of apologetics will be required to justify the Israeli insistence on annexing or controlling these territories.

As for Lebanon itself, from the mid-1950s Israeli planners at the highest level have aimed to dismember it and to install a Christian regime in the south that would be subordinated to Israel and would provide water-short Israel with control over the Litani river. In 1954 Ben Gurion called this aim "the *central duty*, or at least one of the central duties, of our foreign policy... [We] must act in all possible ways to bring about a radical change in Lebanon." A year later, Moshe Dayan proposed that "the Israeli army will enter Lebanon, will occupy the necessary territory, and will create a Christian regime which will ally itself with Israel. The territory from the Litani southward will be totally annexed to Israel and everything will be all right." [Quotes from the diary of Prime Minister Moshe Sharett.] These plans are now being realized.

Long-term Israeli aims are much broader. Shlomo Avineri, formerly director-general of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and an Israeli "dove," suggests that a Christian state might be carved out of Lebanon "with the Moslem areas ceded to Syria," an "undesirable" solution but perhaps the preferable one. Ze'ev Schiff

(continued on page 7)

INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM

FRANK BROADHEAD

The Real Terror Network by Edward Herman, South End Press, 1982; \$7.50 paper.

Early in the Reagan administration Secretary of State Alexander Haig announced that combatting "international terrorism" would replace human rights as a focus of US foreign policy. While the concept of "terrorism" was never strictly defined, Haig claimed that there was a pattern of terrorism which had its roots in the Soviet Union, and whose "conscious policy" was "training, funding and equipping" international terrorists. The apparently random acts of violence perpetrated by small organizations, claimed the Reagan administration, were in fact Soviet-directed instruments in the Cold War.

By focusing on terrorism, the Reagan administration hoped to accomplish two things at once: to further politicize popular fear about violence and street crime, linking these fears to support for domestic repression of leftwing political organizations; and, by focusing on violence attributed to leftwing organizations abroad, to both delegitimize national liberation struggles and to cover up massive support for what Ed Herman calls "the real terror network."

Before examining the public and covert goals of the Reagan administration's anti-terrorism crusade, it is useful to address their view of Soviet motivation. An illustration of how the US right links terrorist acts and Soviet policy goals is given by Samuel Francis, author of *The Soviet Strategy of Terror*, recently published by the conservative Heritage Foundation. In an op-ed article in the *New York Times*, Francis claims that the Soviets tend to support terrorists only in strategic areas like the Middle East, Southern Africa or Central America. Moreover, "each of these areas is associated with natural resources vital to the United States and other 'advanced capitalist' economies, as well as to the economic development of the third world." "In the Middle East," continues Francis, "the role of oil is obvious. In northern Africa, natural gas, oil, and phosphates remain crucial to European and third world transport and food production. In Central America, Cuban-supported Guatemalan terrorists already have bases in southern Mexico, where 75 percent of that country's oil reserves are situated." (*New York Times*, 2/23/81.) Unable to imagine that the US drive to corner the world's resources might inspire legitimate opposition from the people whose territories include these resources, Francis equates resistance to US imperial designs with a Soviet-based conspiracy.

No sooner had the Reagan administration been installed than the US security bureaucracies began to manufacture information to support claims that the Soviets direct international terrorists. Anthony Quainton, now US ambassador to Nicaragua but then director of the State Department's Office for Combatting Terrorism, announced that the method of measuring terrorist incidents would henceforth be revised to include "threats," "hoaxes," and "conspiracies." New data bases, said Quainton, would be used to show that "terrorist incidents" had been understated in the past. William Casey, Reagan's friend and the new director of the CIA, ordered his agency to make a study of the Soviet's role in international terrorism, and Claire Sterling's book, *The Terror Network*, which purported to support these charges, was given wide publicity by the media. The mass media was particularly sensitive to these claims, as they themselves were under attack by rightwing ideologues like Robert Moss and Arnault de Borchegreve, whose novel *The Spike* accused them of being a conduit for Soviet disinformation. And Jeremiah Denton, a rightwing Senator from Alabama, began his chairmanship of the newly revived Subcommittee on Internal Security and Terrorism by holding hearings to investigate charges about Soviet manipulation of the US press.

Thus at the beginning of the Reagan administration it appeared that a new era of witch hunts was beginning, this time organized not against "Communists," but around the more elusive concept of "terrorism". Indeed, very dangerous charges have been made in the US repression apparatus and in the laws and regulations which guide their work. An Office for Combatting Terrorism has been created within the State Department, and the CIA's division concerned with intelligence estimates has recently been taken over by a veteran of its operations division — the division in charge of covert operations. "Terrorism" has even become a concern of local police officials, and special SWAT teams have been created in many cities.

Seemingly non-political government agencies have also been enlisted. Darrell Trent, Deputy Secretary of Transportation, for example, recently organized the First International Conference on Emergency Medical Services. One of the goals of the conference was to anticipate medical emergencies caused by terrorist attacks. Trent, who is co-author of *Terrorism: Threat, Reality, Response*, told the conference that "in essence, we are engaged in an endless, unconventional, undeclared war against multiple and often invisible enemies who seek to topple the established order." Trent's co-author, Robert Kupperman, recently wrote in the *New York Times* that "toughness is the generic prescription but no dogmatic policy is feasible." He urged that we acquire an "agile special-operations force," and proposed that a small task force of non-governmental experts "review the program and make practical recommendations. If, as the Carter administration did, President Reagan were to ask the anti-terrorism bureaucratic

machinery to review itself, we would receive a pablum-like report suggesting that nearly all is well. Unfortunately," concluded Kupperman, "it is not." (*New York Times*, 3/18/81.)

The initial push of the Reagan anti-terrorism campaign has made relatively little domestic impact, largely because it was based on so little real evidence. The information source for Haig's basic charges of Soviet influence on a pattern of terrorism, for example, was soon revealed to be Maj. Gen. Jan Sejna, a henchman of Czechoslovakian party boss Antonin Novotny. Sejna defected to the US in 1968 when the "Prague Spring" reformers threw out the Stalinist old guard. Leslie Gelb, writing in the *New York Times* (10/18/81), pointed out that the CIA then sent Sejna to Western Europe in 1972 to share his information with intelligence agencies there. "What we are hearing is this 10-year-old testimony coming back to us through West European intelligence and some of our own CIA people," one US intelligence official told Gelb, "there is no substantial new evidence." The Reagan administration's demand for proof of a Soviet link to terrorism began to produce a crisis in the intelligence services. William Webster, Director of the FBI, told the NBC program "Meet the Press" on April 26, 1981 that "there is no real evidence of Soviet-sponsored terrorism within the United States." Nor was the case for Soviet influence abroad easily proven. In March, 1981 a draft report by the CIA's National Foreign Assessments Center concluded that there was insufficient evidence to substantiate the Reagan-Haig charges of Soviet influence. Enraged, CIA director William Casey rejected the report, essentially telling the authors to supply evidence supporting the conclusion that the administration wanted. Nor has Senator Denton's investigations of terrorism elicited much of a popular response, or more than a yawn from the US media.

The Real Terror Network

If it is hard to detect much fire behind all the smoke about terrorism coming out of the Reagan administration, this does not mean that the concept has no function in US policy circles. The fluff about Soviet "disinformation" is in fact a screen to hide the extraordinary role of the US government in supporting and initiating terrorism on a scale far surpassing even the wildest claims about the Soviet role. Exposing the dimensions of these lies, and the brutal campaign of terrorism conducted by all US administrations over the last two decades, is the achievement of Edward Herman's very readable book, *The Real Terror Network* (South End Press, 1982; \$7.50 pb). Herman, a professor of finance at the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, is co-author with Noam Chomsky of *The Political Economy of Human Rights*, and has recently written *Corporate Control, Corporate Power*.

Herman's study begins with the elementary point that while "terrorism" has historically had a broad meaning (Webster's defines it as "a mode of governing or opposing government by intimidation), the US government

has tried to redefine the word to mean only direct violence against government forces, not violence committed by government forces. (Unless of course it is terrorism against Soviet bloc countries, such as the assassination attempts that the CIA organized against Castro.) Even among these "retail terrorists," as Herman calls them, the US government really opposes only left wing "terrorism" consistently. It has usually turned a blind eye to terrorism when it serves US purposes, as with the Nicaraguan *somocistas* training with the terrorist Cuban organization Alpha 66 in Florida and California. In other cases it has armed and trained terrorists itself, as with the Cuban exile organizations trained by the CIA in the 1960s. To borrow a device Herman uses several times, imagine the US government's reaction if the Soviet Union were to openly allow Puerto Rican nationalists to hold military exercises in the Soviet Union! Even after Kennedy's "secret war" using the exile organizations against Cuba was over, the groups continued to be the single most dangerous terrorist organization in the United States. Between 1973 and 1979, Cuban exile organizations were responsible for 82 bombings, killing 94 and injuring 4.

While groups associated with the left are only responsible for some, not all of "retail terrorism," this kind of terrorism itself is the cause of only a very small part of the real terror that this world suffers. While the total number of deaths at the hands of "retail terrorists" between 1968 and 1980 totaled 3,668, for example, the total number of "disappearances" in Latin America alone during the same period totaled more than 90,000. As many Indians are killed in Guatemala each year by the state security apparatus as were killed by all the "retail terrorists" in the past decade. And after a relative absence of several centuries, torture has returned. Only *states* use torture extensively as a means of intimidation, and it is performed almost exclusively by state security agents in countries within the US — not Soviet — sphere of influence.

The Real Terror Network goes on to examine the extent and function of terrorism in what Herman calls "National Security States" (NSS). These are "subfascist" states, which, like fascist ones, govern through terror — but unlike them make no attempt to mobilize a mass following. Just the opposite: the function of state violence is to keep down popular participation, and to lower the social wage by smashing trade unions and popular organizations.

Another characteristic of the NSS is the use of torture by the state. By Herman's calculations there are 14 National Security States in the Caribbean and Latin America, and 12 more in the US sphere of influence elsewhere. Between 1960 and 1980, the number of people imprisoned in Latin America exceeded one million. Rightwing death squads, generally based in the state security apparatus, terrorize most Latin American countries. "The thugs have a role to play," says Herman, "they eliminate 'subversives' and intimidate and create anxiety in the rest of the population, all

potential subversives.”

What role does the US play in this massive repression? In cases like the coups in Guatemala in 1954 and in Brazil in 1964, and the toppling of Allende in Chile in 1973, the US is deeply implicated in installing terrorist dictatorships. More generally, National Security States are the products of the counter-revolutionary strategy initiated by John F. Kennedy following the Cuban Revolution, which placed its bet on “modernizing” military officers that the US would train and influence. The US government has armed these dictators to the teeth, and has trained half a million military officers and policemen from 85 countries since 1950. Quoting US officials, Herman asserts that training Latin American military and police “(1) enhances the power of a very strongly anti-communist force in those societies; (2) tightens personal as well as professional bonds between foreign police and military personnel and our own; (3) establishes a dependency relationship ‘for the equipment, training services and economic support they are unable to provide themselves,’ and which are important, therefore, ‘in terms of their continuing ties with the United States’ and as an ‘important instrument of United States foreign policy.’”

The US government also claims that training by US military personnel makes foreign military officers more sensitive to “human rights” concerns. For example, in justifying the training of Salvadoran forces in the US earlier this year, the Administration claimed that

the training at Benning and Bragg will produce not only officers and soldiers well-schooled in military skills, but also men with a well defined sense of the need to maintain the support of the populace through respect for basic human rights and the promotion of a close working relationship with the people. (January certification hearings on El Salvador)

But has US aid and military training turned out officers and gentlemen? Herman points out that there seems to be “significant positive relationships between US flows of aid and *negative* human rights developments (the rise of torture, death squads and the overturn of constitutional governments).” Most of the military leaders of the nine Latin American coups between 1962 and 1977 had been trained in the US. Similarly most of the military battalions that massacred refugees in Chalatenango province, El Salvador in early June had just been trained by US military advisers. Thus there are at least 26 states that are US clients, and that practice torture on a routine, administrative basis.

It is therefore possible to make the case that as Americans we are responsible in large degree for people suffering in several dozen countries, but does the mass media pursue this angle? As in his earlier book, *The Political Economy of Human Rights*, Herman shows that the US media turns a blind eye toward terror which is functional to US interests. In the 1970s, for example, *The Readers Digest* “had more articles on Castro’s Cuba than it did on all 26 US client states that were using torture on an administrative basis in the early and mid-

1970s.” In general, the media does not treat terror in client fascist countries as “news”. When it is reported, it is stripped of its content. Terror of the right is offset by terror by the left, overwhelming a government caught in the middle, and requiring US assistance to bring an end to violence. Dependent on government sources for much of the “news”, the media is also influenced by pressure from sponsors, and from the overlapping personnel in the mass media, big business, and government. Its own ideological biases are also more supportive of the right. Occasionally, as with the case of the “White Paper” on El Salvador, the media and the government cooperate in *inventing* news. But more frequently the typical practice of the media is to simply ignore or minimize the extent of terror by the national security apparatus in states established by or dependent on the US.

At this moment the US is engaged in an aggressive and dangerous foreign policy in the Middle East and El Salvador. The media and the Reagan administration have greatly magnified the “retail terror” of the Palestinians and the El Salvador guerillas, while they are generally silent on the terror of the Israeli and Salvadoran states. Ed Herman’s study of *The Real Terrorist Network* helps us to understand what’s going on here. In his conclusion he maintains that “nothing could contribute more to a reduction in world terrorism than a US withdrawal from its interventions in Latin America ‘in the name of liberty.’... The moral demands and economic and political basis for action were never more clear or of greater urgency.” □

Formerly on the staff of Resist, Frank Brodhead is now living in Philadelphia and is a member of the Resist board.



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ANOTHER NORTH VIETNAM

COLIN DANBY

There have been striking similarities between US policies in El Salvador and policies carried out in Vietnam during the 1960s. Repressive "land reforms," mendacious white papers, and fake elections are all chillingly familiar, as is the strategy of counterinsurgency and attacks on the civilian population, deliberately creating refugees.

These parallels go beyond El Salvador, to Nicaragua. The Reagan administration, which took office determined to get tough on communism, had two basic intentions in Central America: to punish and if possible overthrow the Sandinistas, and to defeat the Salvadoran insurgency. The primary claim used to justify both aims is that the Salvadoran insurgents are supported and directed by outsiders, principally through Nicaragua. An identical claim was the basic justification for US policy in Vietnam: the NLF had to be fought in South Vietnam because it represented external aggression and not indigenous interests, and North Vietnam had to be attacked because it was supplying and directing the NLF.

Most analyses of US activities against Nicaragua have seen them as parts of a destabilization campaign, of the kind the US has waged repeatedly against unfriendly Latin American countries. But there are two fundamental differences between present-day Nicaragua and Arbenz's Guatemala, Allende's Chile, or Manley's Jamaica.

Not Another Chile

The first difference is that unlike Arbenz, Allende or Manley, the Sandinistas came to power in Nicaragua through a revolution (the first in Latin America, excepting Grenada, since Cuba in 1959) and the Sandinistas have the support of a large army and citizen's militia. Without subverting or neutralizing these forces, there is no way of overthrowing the Nicaraguan government (short of a major invasion and occupation by tens of thousands of foreign troops). Counterrevolutionary forces, moreover, are deeply divided and the *Somocistas* lack political credibility. Destabilizing tactics can hurt Nicaragua, but in the absence of a strong national counterrevolutionary institution, like the army in Chile or Seaga's Jamaica Labor Party in Jamaica, they will not topple the Sandinistas.

But there is little cause for rejoicing among supporters of the Sandinista government. The US will continue to wage military, economic, and propaganda campaigns against Nicaragua. As Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman note (*After the Cataclysm*, pp. 11-12):

The primary U.S. goal in the Third World is to ensure that it remains open to economic penetration and political control. Failing this the United States exerts every effort to ensure that societies that try to strike an independent course

— specifically, those that are called "Communist" in contemporary political jargon — will suffer the harshest conditions that U.S. power can impose so as to keep "the rot from spreading" by "ideological successes," in the terminology employed by U.S. global planners.

Thus economic blockades have been imposed against Cuba and Vietnam, and US ally South Africa fights a low-level war against Angola; the resulting economic hardships are then routinely ascribed to communist "mismanagement."

Current US tactics against Nicaragua can be found in George Black and Judy Butler's "Target Nicaragua" in the January-February issue of NACLA's *Report on the Americas*, "The CIA Rides Again," by Saul Landau and Craig Nelson in the March 6, 1982 issue of *The Nation*, and "The Coming War with Nicaragua" by Jeff McConnell in the May 1982 *Resist*. The military plans that have been described are entirely consistent with the hypothesis that the US plans a continuing program of harassment, not an all-out invasion, although it suits US purposes to persuade Nicaragua that such an invasion is imminent. Rather there will be frequent incursions, sometimes by large units, designed to tie down a large part of the Nicaraguan army and keep the country militarized, and an aggressive campaign of sabotage to impede Nicaragua's economic recovery.

The Propaganda War

The second major difference between the situation of Nicaragua today and those of countries like Guatemala in 1954, Chile in 1973, and Jamaica in 1980 is the nearby war in El Salvador, or more specifically the needs of the US propaganda apparatus in intervening in that war. In order to justify continued US intervention on behalf of the rightist Salvadoran government, the administration must convince the American people that it is opposing an insurgency of external origin. Their claim is that the FDR-FMLN does not have the support of the Salvadoran people, and that its successes are due instead to foreign arms and training. On March 20, 1982, for example, the State Department released a report entitled "Cuban and Nicaraguan Support for the Salvadoran Insurgency." Without presenting evidence, the report claimed that Cuba and Nicaragua were not only providing essential support for the insurgency, but that they were in fact directing it from a command center outside Managua. If there were a government in Nicaragua friendly to US interests, it would be impossible to make this kind of claim. It is ironic, but for the time being the US needs the Sandinistas.

This is all remarkably similar to US policy toward North Vietnam during the war there. While the Pentagon Papers reveal that the US in fact knew that the NLF was a movement indigenous to South Vietnam, the claim throughout the war was that it was directed and supplied from north of the 17th parallel.

North Vietnam, in turn, was portrayed as an agent of Soviet expansionism, just as Nicaragua is now being presented. On March 9, 1982 the State Department staged an elaborate presentation on the "Military Buildup in Nicaragua," using aerial reconnaissance

photographs. The main purpose was to show that "the Sandinistas are achieving military force levels and capabilities that are in excess of those normally required for purely defensive purposes." (*New York Times*, 10 March 1982). That is, Nicaragua should be regarded as an expansionist, belligerent country, a threat to the rest of Central America. Great pains were taken to demonstrate Soviet and Cuban involvement in this "buildup." Not only were the advisers Cuban and the tanks Soviet, but Nicaragua was even building "Cuban style" installations with "Soviet style" obstacle courses, and so on. The implication was that Nicaragua should be regarded as a tool of Soviet expansionism.

The briefing's second purpose was to substantiate claims of Sandinista brutality toward the Miskito Indians. Before-and-after photos were presented of sixteen destroyed villages along the Rio Coco, the border with Honduras. The claim was that the Sandinistas had raided the villages and "killed or imprisoned large numbers of Indians." In fact the Rio Coco area has suffered numerous incursions by counterrevolutionary Miskito elements acting in collaboration with Honduran forces. The Sandinistas say that they have had to relocate people in a number of villages close to the border because it is difficult to protect them. It is by no means clear who is responsible for the destruction shown in the State Department photographs. What is clear is the State Department's eagerness to prove atrocities. In February Alexander Haig presented a photograph of burning corpses which had appeared in *Le Figaro*, captioned as Sandinista forces burning the bodies of slaughtered Miskitos. It turned out that the photo was three years old, and showed Red Cross workers in the Western part of the country burning bodies of people killed by Somoza's National Guard.

In 1969, 1970, and 1971 President Nixon made a series of wild claims about murders committed by the North Vietnamese government during the 1950s (Chomsky and Herman, *The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism*, p. 341). In both cases the picture presented was one of bloodthirsty communists, armed to the teeth, trying to inflict murderous regimes on nearby countries.

Thus in broad outline, Nicaragua has come to play the role of North Vietnam in the US intervention in El Salvador. At the moment, US military activity against Nicaragua is still covert, corresponding to covert operations against North Vietnam in the early 1960s, at a time when our involvement in the South was still restricted to funding and advisors. If US troops are used in El Salvador further escalation can be expected against Nicaragua, perhaps including the bombing of "supply routes" by the Honduran air force. At the moment this kind of thing seems far-fetched, and it is easy to make fun of the ineptness of Reagan administration propaganda. But this propaganda has been undertaken seriously, and lays a basis for deeper involvement in Central America. □

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continued

points out further that it is in Israel's interest to work for a partition of Iraq into Sunni, Shiite, and Kurdish states, one motive behind Israel's support for Iran. Similar plans are being envisioned for Syria; and as for a "Palestinian" Jordan, it will always be a potential target for eventual dismemberment under such "provocations" as those that have been concocted in Lebanon in recent months.

In this context, one should not lightly disregard the proposals of right-wing Israelis, which have often been mocked in the past before they were realized as state policy. In February 1982 the Information Bureau of the World Zionist Organization published an article by Oded Yinon in *Kivunim*, a journal described as "the ideological expression of the WZO." Yinon argues that Israel must restore the status quo that reigned in the Sinai before the "mistaken peace agreement" with Sadat. Egypt is weak ("a corpse"), and events will lead to Israeli reconquest of the Sinai. Furthermore, the dismemberment of Egypt should be "the political goal of Israel in the 1980s on its Western front." On the other fronts, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq, and the Arabian Peninsula must also be dismembered into smaller religious and ethnic "factors," as in the Levant during the Ottoman period. Jordan will be handed over to the Palestinians, and the population of the occupied territories will emigrate there, "the Arabs to Jordan and the Jews in the territories to the west of the river." With the separation of the two peoples, there will be "true peace." All of this is encased in ideological and geopolitical fantasies about the coming collapse of the West before the Soviet-Third World onslaught and about Israel's chosen role in defending European civilization.

The Israeli writer Amos Elon perceives in this sort of ranting "the spreading of irrationalism in our collective existence." One can observe such irrationality at the highest level of the military command, as well as in political circles — for example, when Chief-of-Staff Rafael Eytan states in the official army journal that "if the Russians start a war against Israel, the Israeli Defense Forces will win." Irrational it may be in the long run, but as long as the United States stands ready to back every successful military strike, every act of repression in the occupied territories, every further step toward the creation of a greater Israel, then Israeli intransigence and violence will only increase, until the day when the spreading regional conflict will finally bring Israel itself to disaster — and perhaps the rest of the world along with it. □

A comprehensive packet of reprints about Lebanon is available from the Ad Hoc Lebanon Emergency Coalition, 2161 Mass. Ave. Cambridge, MA 02140 (\$3.00 postpaid).

GRANTS

STOP THE PENTAGON/SERVE THE PEOPLE (STP, PO Box 13416, Philadelphia, PA 19101)

STP is a national clearinghouse for anti-militarism activists working on what the Pentagon calls "man-power" issues such as recruitment and enlistment, the "poverty draft," Selective Service developments and conditions in the military. Founded in November 1981 by two long time anti-war activists, STP's work focusses on those who are confronted by the military: the unemployed, enlisted GI's and those in Black and Hispanic communities. Work is also being done to support current resisters and provide information and assistance to those who are considering enlistment. The intent of the project is to build, support and provide resources for networks of local activists nationwide. *The Pentagon Paper*, STP's monthly newsletter will provide a forum for these concerns and issues. Other projects of STP include a clipping service and work on a resource book for organizers on the poverty draft, enlistment and recruitment. Most important of STP's work is the outreach and field work being done in Black and Hispanic communities where poverty draft recruitment is most prevalent. Resist's grant was used for production of a promotional brochure.

WASHINGTON PRISON NEWS SERVICE (WPNS, 219 First Ave. N., Suite 135, Seattle, WA 98109)

A newsletter written by inmates in Washington state prisons, WPNS was begun by an inmate at Washington State Penitentiary (WSP) and is now a collective effort among prisoners in several of the state prisons. The goals of WPNS, the editor tells us, are to disseminate some real and correct information about the prison system, counter some of the distortions and outright lies put out by the prison bureaucracy, work on changing people's very negative conception of prisoners and help prisoners develop some communication skills. As they work to expose injustices within the prison system, the editor and writers of WPNS are constantly harrassed by prison administrators. Most recently the editor and one of the writers, both from WSP, were moved to Monroe prison for special offenders pending out of state transfer. It was stated very clearly at their transfer hearing by the transfer committee that this motion was a direct result of the prisoners' involvement with publication of the newsletter. The news service is typed, printed, collated and mailed outside the prison by a lawyer and a printing collective in Seattle. All efforts are being made to keep the news service going despite stiff opposition. Resist's grant helped pay for production of several issues of the weekly newsletter. Individuals can receive the WPNS newsletter for \$2.50 per month from the above address.

MASSACORN (100 Massachusetts Ave., Boston, MA 02115)

On Saturday, July 17, fifty members of the Roxbury chapter of MassACORN rallied for their seventh squatting day. The purpose of the rally was to raise the issue of decent and affordable housing for low to moderate income people in the Boston area, and to settle four families into their newly squatted homes. After rallying at a local church, a seven car caravan drove to each of the squatters' homes. ACORN placards declaring the need for housing and asserting the sentiment "taking what is ours" were propped on the porches. ACORN members spoke to the need for housing and their right to squat, and chanted, sang and prayed. This year ten families have squatted in houses in the city of Boston as part of ACORN's program. The campaign was initiated in response to the housing crisis in Boston where, ACORN tells us, the average price of a home is \$82,000 and the vacancy rate for apartment rentals is less than 2%. ACORN's Campaign for Decent and Affordable Housing allows people the opportunity to own their own homes at affordable prices. The advantage to families' squatting as part of this program is the legal support offered and participation in ACORN's ongoing lobbying for squatters' rights at city hall. Asked why they feel compelled to squat abandoned homes ACORN members responded: "All we've had is broken promises from the city but we've only begun to fight. People in the neighborhoods are tired of outside interests like realtors and speculators ripping us off and pulling our neighborhoods out from under us." Resist's grant was used for the general costs of ACORN's housing campaign.


WAR REFUGEES IN THEIR OWN LAND THEY NEED YOUR HELP TODAY

Once more the people of Lebanon have been the victims of intense Israeli military action against Palestinian and Syrian forces in the country. A telex from a relief worker in Beirut last week tells the grim story:

SUFFERING OF CIVILIANS INCALCULABLE. PARTS OF THE CITY UNDER HEAVY AIR ATTACK. TODAY ALONE 100 KILLED, 300 WOUNDED. INCLUDED AMONG VICTIMS WERE TWO BUSLOADS OF CHILDREN GOING TO THE UNITED NATIONS VOCATIONAL CENTER. MANY HOMES DESTROYED. WAREHOUSES CONTAINING FOODSTUFFS OF THE GOVERNMENT RELIEF COMMITTEE COMPLETELY DEMOLISHED. MANY FIRES. SIX AMBULANCES AND TWO FIRE TRUCKS BLOWN UP. CARS BURIED WITH PEOPLE INSIDE. OVERCROWDING IN CITY UNBEARABLE, AS MASSES FLEE ISRAELI INVASION IN THE SOUTH, WAR REFUGEES IN THEIR OWN LAND. FAMILIES NOW LIVING IN PUBLIC GARDENS AND IN THE STREET. HOSPITALS FULL. ELECTRICITY OUT. EMERGENCY AID NEEDED.

AFSC, BEIRUT

In response, the American Friends Service Committee has already sent \$25,000 of disaster relief funds. With your generous help we can do much more to decrease the suffering of these innocent victims of war. Please send us your donation today.

 To: AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE
1501 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102

Please accept my contribution for civilian war victims in Lebanon. (Tax deductible.)

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

